

St. Peter's Evangelical Lutheran Church & Elementary School
Our Mission: Learn God's Truth,
Share Spirit's Healing, Follow Jesus' Ways.

1st Sunday after Epiphany,
Baptism of Christ, Day of the Three Kings

January 7, 2024, 8:45am

Feast of the Faithful

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(P) Pastor; (A) Worship Assistant; (\*) Please stand as you're able;  
Congregation responses in **BOLD**

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GATHERING

WELCOME

PRELUDE: "Let All Together Praise Our Lord" –D. Buxtehude

CALL to WORSHIP for CHRIST'S EPIPHANY

P: We begin this day as we began our life in our baptism:
in the name of God, Sovereign, ✠ Savior, and Spirit. **Amen**

A: We give thanks on this holy day, adorned with epiphanies:
for the star that led the magi to the manger,

that the nations may see the light of Christ;

for the water turned to wine at Cana's wedding,

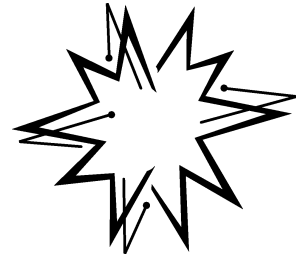
that the people taste the goodness of the Lord;

for the baptism of our Lord Jesus Christ in the Jordan,

that the Christ would save us all.

This is the day that the Lord has made,

we will rejoice and be glad in it. Alleluia!



Processional Gospel: Matthew 2:1-12 *International Children's Bible*

Jesus was born in the town of Bethlehem in Judea during the time when Herod was king. After Jesus was born, some wise men from the east came to Jerusalem.

They asked, "**Where is the baby who was born to be the king of the Jews? We saw his star in the east. We came to worship him.**"

When King Herod heard about this new king of the Jews, he was troubled. And all the people in Jerusalem were worried too.

Herod called a meeting of all the leading priests and teachers of the law. He asked them where the Christ would be born.

They answered, "**In the town of Bethlehem in Judea.**

The prophet wrote about this in the Scriptures:

**'But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah,
you are important among the rulers of Judah.
A ruler will come from you.
He will be like a shepherd for my people, the Israelites.'**

Then Herod had a secret meeting with the wise men from the east.
He learned from them the exact time they first saw the star.

Then Herod sent the wise men to Bethlehem. He said to them,
**"Go and look carefully to find the child. When you find him,
come tell me. Then I can go worship him too."**

The wise men heard the king and then left. They saw the same star they had seen in the east. It went before them until it stopped above the place where the child was.

When the wise men saw the star, they were filled with joy. They went to the house where the child was and saw him with his mother, Mary.

They bowed down and worshiped the child. They opened the gifts they brought for him. They gave him treasures of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

But God warned the wise men in a dream not to go back to Herod.
So they went home to their own country by a different way.

***GATHERING HYMN: "We Three Kings of Orient Are"**

- 1 We three kings of Orient are; bearing gifts we traverse afar,
field and fountain, moor and mountain, following yonder star.

Refrain

**Oh, star of wonder, star of night,
star with royal beauty bright;
westward leading, still proceeding,
guide us to thy perfect light!**

- 2 Born a king on Bethlehem's plain, gold I bring to crown him again;
king forever, ceasing never, over us all to reign. *Refrain*

- 3 Frankincense to offer have I; incense owns a deity nigh;
prayer and praising, gladly raising, worshiping God Most High.

Refrain

- 4 Myrrh is mine; its bitter perfume breathes a life of gathering gloom;
sorrowing, sighing, bleeding, dying, sealed in the stone-cold tomb.

Refrain

- 5 Glorious now behold him arise, King and God and Sacrifice;
heav'n sings alleluia: alleluia the earth replies. *Refrain*

Text: John Henry Hopkins Jr., 1820-1891, alt.

***GREETING and PRAYER of the DAY**

P: The love of God, the light of ☩ Christ,
and the fire of Spirit is with you all.

And also with you. We join in prayer. *A brief silence.* Holy God, creator of light and giver of goodness, your voice moves over the waters. Immerse us in your grace, and transform us by your Spirit, that we may follow after your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

HYMN of PRAISE: "Joy to the World"

- 1 Joy to the world, the Lord is come!
Let earth receive her king;
let ev'ry heart prepare him room
and heav'n and nature sing,
and heav'n and nature sing,
and heav'n, and heav'n and nature sing.
- 4 He rules the world with truth and grace
and makes the nations prove
the glories of his righteousness
and wonders of his love,
and wonders of his love,
and wonders, wonders of his love.

GOD'S WORD

READING: Acts 19:1-7

In Ephesus, Paul encounters people who had received John's baptism of repentance but had never heard of the Holy Spirit or of baptism in the name of Jesus. After Paul baptizes them, the Holy Spirit comes upon them and empowers them with gifts of the Spirit.

A: This is a reading from the Acts of the Apostles.

While Apollos was in Corinth, Paul passed through the interior regions and came to Ephesus, where he found some disciples. He said to them, "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you became believers?"

They replied, "No, we have not even heard that there is a Holy Spirit."

Then he said, "Into what then were you baptized?"

They answered, "Into John's baptism."

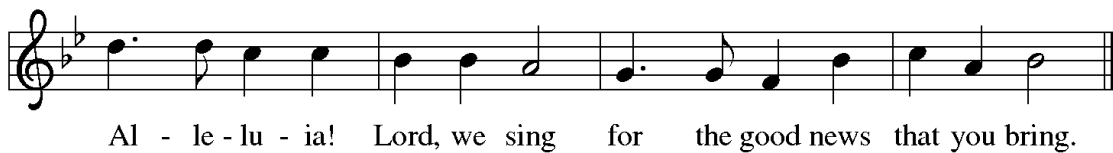
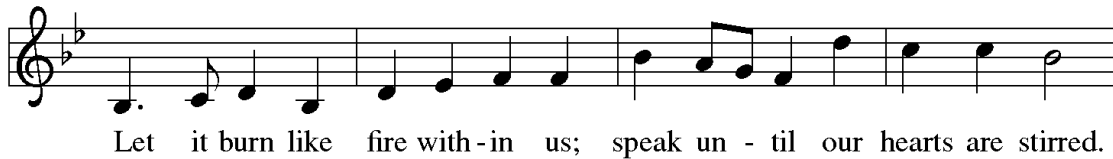
Paul said, "John baptized with the baptism of repentance, telling the people to believe in the one who was to come after him, that is, in Jesus."

On hearing this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. When Paul had laid his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came upon them, and they spoke in tongues and prophesied—altogether there were about twelve of them.

This is the Holy Wisdom, Holy Word.

We give our thanks to God.

***WELCOMING the GOSPEL**



***HOLY GOSPEL: Mark 1:4-11**

Mark's gospel reports the story of Jesus' baptism with some irony: the one on whom the Spirit descends is himself the one who will baptize others with the Holy Spirit.

P: This is the Holy Gospel as the Word was given to Mark, the 3rd chapter.

We give glory to you, O Lord.

The beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

As it is written in the prophet Isaiah,

"See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you,

who will prepare your way;

the voice of one crying out in the wilderness:

'Prepare the way of the Lord,

make his paths straight,"

John the baptizer appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. And people from the whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem were going out to him, and were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. Now John was clothed with camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. He proclaimed, "The one who is more powerful than

I is coming after me; I am not worthy to stoop down and untie the thong of his sandals. I have baptized you with water; but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."

In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. And just as he was coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens torn apart and the Spirit descending like a dove on him. And a voice came from heaven, "You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased."

This is the Good News of Christ's Victory.

We give praise to you, O Christ.

***HYMN of the DAY: #423 "Shall We Gather at the River"**

MESSAGE: Pr. Kati Kluckman-Ault *silence for reflection follows*

PRAYERS of the PEOPLE

A: As we celebrate Christ embodied in human form, we pray for God's blessing on the church, the world, and all of creation. *A brief silence.*

Inspire wisdom and a spirit of proclamation in your church, God of forgiveness. Uplift leaders to share the truth of your word in community. Encourage us to live into the promises of baptism, working for justice and peace in all the world.

God of grace, **receive our prayer.**

Renew your creation, God of thunder and mighty waters. Restore the rivers in which your children are baptized. May fields flourish and grow. Summon the stewards and caretakers of the land to cherish your good works.

God of grace, **receive our prayer.**

Give strength to your leaders, God who is present in every country and community. Raise up leaders committed to equity and healing. Grant them discernment and compassion as they lead in love.

God of grace, **receive our prayer.**

Protect and cherish the most vulnerable among us, God of strength. Accompany those separated from family or hurting from broken relationships. Shelter our unhoused neighbors and any experiencing poverty. Protect those incarcerated in prisons and detention centers. Care for the sick and suffering.

God of grace, **receive our prayer.**

Encourage this congregation, God who calls and sends disciples. Guide us in accompanying, learning from, and serving our neighbors on the margins, following the example of Jesus.

God of grace, **receive our prayer.**

P: We especially pray for Lori, John, Betty, Nancy, Beth, Louisa, Agnes, the Stockdale family, the Cox family, ...

God of grace, **receive our prayer.**

Here other intercessions may be offered.

Trusting the assurance of the Holy Spirit, we remember William, Lillian, and all who have died and rest in God's care. Give hope to those who grieve even as we rest in your eternal promise of resurrection.

God of grace, **receive our prayer.**

Knowing the Holy Spirit intercedes for us, we offer these prayers and the silent prayers of our hearts in the name of our Savior, Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

JESUS' SUPPER

INVITED to the FEAST

Gracious God, you reveal your Son
to us in word and sacrament.

Open our hearts to receive him now.

As we share this food for the journey,
**by his presence grant us the forgiveness
that Jesus brings. Amen**

PEACE

The peace of Christ is always with you. **And also with you.**

RECEIVING OUR TITHES and OFFERINGS

OFFERING HYMN: "Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence"

- 1 Let all mortal flesh keep silence,
and with fear and trembling stand;
ponder nothing earthly-minded,
for with blessing in his hand
Christ our God to earth descending
comes full homage to demand.
- 2 King of kings, yet born of Mary,
as of old on earth he stood,
Lord of lords in human vesture,
in the body and the blood,
he will give to all the faithful
his own self for heav'nly food.

OFFERING PRAYER

A: Let us pray. *A brief silence.* Blessed are you, Holy One, for all good things come from you. In bread and cup you open heaven to us. Meet us at this table, that we receive what we seek and follow your Son, Jesus, in whose name we pray. **Amen**

*GREAT THANKSGIVING

P: Christ the Morningstar is with you. **And also with you.**
Lift up your hearts in Spirit. **Our hearts go up to God.**
We give honor and glory to the Holy One.

We give thanks and praise to Abba God.

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, through our Savior Jesus Christ. By the leading of a star he was shown forth to all nations; in the waters of the Jordan you proclaimed him your beloved Son; and in the miracle of water turned to wine he revealed your glory. And so, with all the choirs of angels, with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

*HOLY



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow-er and might,
heav'n and earth are full of your glo-ry. Ho-san - na in the high - est.
Bless - ed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Ho -
san-na in the high - est, ho - san - na in the high - est.

*THANKSGIVING at the TABLE

P: Blessed are you, O living God,
sovereign of time and space.
You bring forth bread from the earth
and fruit from the vine.

Your word leads us across the sea to freedom,
**and you have brought us together
to the mount of your revelation.**

Your face shines on us! Your voice thunders!
We bless God forever!

Blessed are you, O living God,
for your glory revealed in Jesus Christ.
He is our Servant, **who washes our feet with love.**
He is our Lamb, **whose blood takes away our sin.**
He is our Host at this meal, **offering us the cup of salvation.**
Your face shines on us! Your voice thunders!
We bless God forever!

On the night of his suffering, Jesus gave thanks for the bread that he held in his hands. This bread he shared among his followers, saying:
All of you, take this, eat this; it is my body,
handed over for you. Do this and remember me.

Then he shared drink with them, saying:
All of you, take this, drink this; it is my blood, the blood of the new covenant that begins now and lasts forever. This blood is poured out for you and for many so that sins may be taken away. Do this and remember me.

Blessed are you, O living God, for the gift of your loving Spirit.
Holy Father, fill this meal with the life of your Son.
Make us servants of one another and of everyone in need.
Bring us with all your people to the joy of the resurrection.
Your face shines on us, now and always!
We bless God forever! Come, holy Jesus.

Through Christ all glory and honor is yours,
Heavenly Father, with the Spirit of light and peace,
in your body the Church, both now and forever. **Amen**

***LORD'S PRAYER**

Watching for Christ's appearing, we pray as he taught us.
**Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name,
thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.**
**Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as
we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into
temptation, but deliver us from evil.**
**For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and
ever. Amen**

INVITATION to the MEAL

Bread is broken. **Love is shared.**

Sharing Communion *Please take time for meditation & prayer.*

SONG during SUPPER: # 305 "When Jesus Came to Jordan"

SENDING

PRAYER for MISSION

A: Let us together pray. *A brief silence.* Giver of every gift, **Christ's body is our food, and we are Christ's body. Raise us to life by your power for the benefit of all and to your glory, now and forever. Amen**

MISSION UPDATE: *opportunities for learning & service*

*BLESSING

P: Receive the blessing. *A brief silence.*

God who names you, Christ who claims you,
and the Holy Spirit who dwells in you,
bless you ☩ and remain with you always.



***SENDING HYMN: # 304 "Christ, When for Us You Were Baptized"**

*SENDING into MISSION

A: Go in peace. You are God's beloved.

We will Learn God's Truth.

We will Share Spirit's Healing.

We will Follow Jesus' Way.

P: Let's share Christ's peace as we go
to love and serve all!

Amen. Yes, we will!

Please take care as you greet your neighbors with the Peace.

POSTLUDE: "Christ, When for Us You Were Baptized" –J.S. Bach

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At the time of this writing, please keep the following in your prayers: ELCA Bishop Elizabeth Eaton, Synod Bishop Bill Gohl, the Stockdale family on the passing of William (12/25), the Cox family on the passing of Lillian (12/27), those hospitalized or at home recuperating, and our at-home worshippers.

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Today's Altar Flowers are Given to the Glory of God

In Loving Memory of my parents,  
May and Howard LeBrun,  
and brothers Skip, Ned, Jack, and Rich.  
Given by Patty Read.

For the Glory of God.

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Today's Worship Folders are Given to the Glory of God

For the Glory of God.

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Attendance for Sunday, December 31, 2023: 24

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Helping with today's worship:

Worship Assistant:
Heather Frederick

Ushers:
Jerry Dohmeier and Joe Mills

Learning, Serving, & Fellowship Opportunities

Thank You to Pr. Kati Kluckman-Ault for presiding over our worship this morning while Pr. Lans is away.

Christmas Card Boxes will be removed after today's services.

2024 Envelopes are available in the back of the church.

Unclaimed poinsettias are available off the right side of the altar area.

Baltimore Cancer Support Group will resume meeting in the new year on January 11th at 7:00 pm.

Sponsorship Available: Flowers for 10:15 am. 1/21 (contact Nancy Barnes).

For every NEW regular deposit account opened at Eastern Savings Bank (Fullerton branch only) St. Peter's Lutheran Church receives \$5! Visit the Fullerton branch at 4113 Wholesale Club Drive, Suite 130 or go to EasternSavingsBank.com.